



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Natural  
Resources  
Conservation  
Service

430 G Street  
Davis, CA 95616  
(530) 792-5600  
FAX (530) 792-5790

February 8, 2000

Mr. Peter Jacobsen, Ecosystem  
Early Implementation  
CALFED Bay-Delta Program  
1416 Ninth Street, Suite 1155  
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Mr. Jacobsen:

Subject: Small Diversion Fish Screen Program (98-R01)  
BOR Interagency Agreement 1425-99-AA-20-17700  
NRCS Agreement Number 65-9104-9-141

The Natural Resources Conservation Service is requesting an amendment to the above referenced contract.

**Background.** In February 1998, CALFED approved \$900,000 for Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to expand on an existing small fish screen project in Colusa County. The expanded CALFED funded effort partners with local organizations and irrigators to prioritize and screen up to 15 small diversions on the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and their tributaries. Cost sharing has been provided by a number of other partners that has resulted in the financial assistance portion to install the fish screens requiring only 25 to 50 percent CALFED funding on individual screens. This has allowed for more fish screens to be potentially installed than would otherwise be the case.

**Issue.** Anticipating using off the shelf designs, NRCS costs for technical assistance were limited to \$95,000 in the original contract. The NRCS has provided documentation on the installation of the fish screens, some failures of the original design, and is actively involved in the design and installation of new custom screens. The custom screens require substantial more design, installations, and operations and maintenance technical assistance. This has increased the technical assistance needs to approximately 3 to 5 times the original estimate. The custom designed screens are also approximately three to four times the original off the shelf cost, with the original cost per installed screen exclusive of technical assistance ranging from \$25,000 (10 cfs) to \$65,000 (40 cfs), the new costs range from \$95,000 to \$180,000 to \$200,000 per screen installed exclusive of technical assistance.

**Recommendation.** NRCS is requesting an amendment to provide the needed additional technical assistance and financial assistance. Two options are available: 1.) allow reallocation within the existing contract from financial assistance to technical assistance, this would allow approximately five more screens to be installed, for a total of nine by completion of contract, and 2.) provide additional financial assistance estimated at \$361,000 and technical assistance estimated at \$387,000, this would allow for 15 screens to be designed and installed. NRCS recommends the second option.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service,  
formerly the Soil Conservation Service,  
is an agency of the  
United States Department of Agriculture

Letter to Jacobsen

Page 2

If neither option is selected, NRCS will be require to cease technical assistance on the project in approximately two months so as to not violate the Economy Act of 1932, as amended (31 USC 1535). We estimate approximately \$450,000 to \$500,000 financial assistance will be returned, with four to five screens installed.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Luana Kiger at (530) 792-5661.

Sincerely,



JEFFREY R. VONK  
State Conservationist

cc:  
Susan Tharp, Acting SAO, NRCS, Davis, California  
Luana Kiger, NRCS, Davis, California